

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action of February 20, 2003, in the above-identified patent application.

In the Office Action, Claim 19 was objected to as being dependent on a cancelled claim.

Claims 11-20 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being incomplete for omitting essential steps. Specifically, it is the position of the Patent Office that the claims failed to positively recite how one would determine the physical relationship between the gas lines, an electronic navigation system and a computer unit.

Claims 11, 13-16 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,446,445 to Bloomfield et al.

Claims 12, 17-19 were rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bloomfield and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,946,095 to Henningsen et al.

Turning first to the claim objections, Claim 19 has been amended and made dependent on Claim 18.

With respect to the rejection under Section 112, Claim 11 has been amended and is directed to a mobile measuring device for monitoring leaks on gas lines. The device comprises an electronic navigation system to guide an operator along a track predefined by a computer unit. The computer links position

information to topographic information about the area to be monitored, which is stored in the computer unit to generate a predefined track. The device further includes a documentation system to document results measured by a gas-testing device that is mounted thereon.

Applicants submit that with this amendment, the rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, has been overcome. Claim 11, as amended, adequately recites the physical relationship between the gas lines and an electronic navigation system and the computer unit. As for method Claim 20, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection that such claim was in any way incomplete. In any event, the Patent Office has not identified what essential steps have been omitted from Claim 20.

Turning now to the rejections based on art, Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's characterization of Bloomfield et al. Specifically, Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's position that Bloomfield et al. discloses an electronic navigation system able to guide an operator along a predefined track. Bloomfield et al. discloses a device that is able to react to the detection of obstacles in the direction of movement of the device. This is perhaps best described in column 5, lines 8-13, column 5, lines 65 to column 6, line 17, and column 11, lines 31-51. However, Bloomfield et al.

discloses a measure and react procedure, and does not disclose a device that is positively navigated along a predefined track.

More particularly, Bloomfield et al. does not disclose navigating based on a geographic information system which links position information to topographic information about the area to be monitored. The absence of such disclosure from Bloomfield et al. is based, in large part, on the fact that Bloomfield et al. lacks any system to determine the position of the device.

Bloomfield et al. also does not disclose a documentation system as claimed in amended Claim 11. As indicated above, the device in Bloomfield et al. is based on measure and react procedures. The gas-testing device described in Bloomfield et al. is used to detect a gas leakage and then to take necessary emergency measures (see, for example, column 26). Bloomfield et al., however, does not disclose that the measured values can be documented in a documentation system.

With respect to Claim 20, because Bloomfield et al. is directed to a measure and react system, it does not disclose feeding navigation information about a predefined path into an electronic navigation system, and producing signals indicating the path to be taken by means of the electronic navigation system.

For these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 11 (as amended) and Claim 20 are not anticipated by Bloomfield et al.

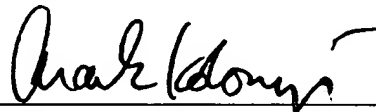
With respect to the rejection under 35 USC §103, Applicants submit that Claim 11, as amended, would not have been obvious in view of Bloomfield et al. in combination with Henningsen et al. Neither Bloomfield et al. nor Henningsen et al. discloses an electronic navigation system that guides the operator along the track predefined by a computer unit which links position information to the topographic information about the area to be monitored. Thus, even if one could combine Bloomfield et al. and Henningsen et al., he would still not arrive at the invention of Claim 11.

Moreover, Applicants submit that one of skill in the art would not have been motivated to combine the teachings of Bloomfield et al. and Henningsen et al. Specifically, one would not be motivated to combine the subject matter described in Henningsen et al., which references a large vehicle designed for detecting natural gas in pipelines, with a smaller, home-type appliance, more in the category of a home burglar alarm or a home smoke detector. Applicants submit that the devices disclosed in Bloomfield et al. and Henningsen et al. relate to fields that are non-analogous and distinct from one another, and

there is no suggestion why one of skill in the art would be motivated to combine one with the other.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that Claims 11-12 and 14-20 are now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of such Claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claim 13 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Claims 11 and 19 have been amended to read as follows.

11. (Amended) A mobile measuring device for monitoring leaks on gas lines, comprising an electronic navigation system to guide an operator along a track predefined by and a computer unit with ~~a geographic information and documentation system~~ which links position information to topographic information about the area to be monitored stored in said computer unit to generate said predefined track, and a documentation system to document results measured by a gas testing device mounted thereon.

19. (Amended) The device as claimed in Claim & 18, characterized in that the direction component of the distance vector and/or the magnitude of the distance vector is/are generated via an electronic compass, an orthogonal pair of speed sensors, a two-axis orthogonal acceleration sensor or a gyroscope.